Kitsap Fast Ferries Reservation System Fact Sheet

Kitsap Transit introduced a reservation system in 2017 when it launched fast ferry service between Bremerton and Seattle and has strived to make improvements to the system based on user feedback. This fact sheet addresses common user questions and concerns.

Why can't I get reservations for the sailings I want?

The simple answer is that demand for seats far outstrips the number of seats available.

When the reservation window opens at 9:00 AM, more than 400 users compete for the 88 spots on each of our three morning commuter sailings (5:25 AM, 6:45 AM, 8:00 AM) and the 88 spots on each of our three afternoon commuter sailings (3:55 PM, 5:10 PM, 6:25 PM). With most of those users seeking both a departure and return reservation each day, there are 264 reservations available per day. As a result, in the best case, users will get a reservation between 60 percent and 66 percent of the time; to be sure, reservations are most difficult to get on the most popular sailings to Seattle in the morning and to Bremerton in the afternoon due to overwhelming demand.

What improvements has Kitsap Transit made to the reservation system?

The system allocates reservations on a first-come, first-serve basis. On June 1, Kitsap Transit beefed up the processing power to manage the surge of reservation requests when the window opens, and the result has been faster page loads and shorter transaction times.

In mid-June, the agency rolled out a major change to its booking process that allows a user to book a week's worth of trips in one transaction. Previously, the user had to book each trip individually, and if a user booked a roundtrip, there was no way to cancel only one leg of the trip; that issue is resolved in the updated version. Users asked for this change and welcomed it. On August 1, when the window for September sailings opened, the vast majority of the orders were for five sailings.

Furthermore, once a user selects a sailing time, that slot is locked, giving the user time to complete the rest of the booking process. In the past users were forced to race through the booking process or risk losing their spot to another user making a booking.

To curb overbookings, Kitsap Transit now restricts users to booking no more than two sailings per day, with a limit of two passengers; in the past, users could book multiple sailings in the morning or the afternoon for up to four passengers. Kitsap Transit also now requires users to register an account with our system and to provide the last five digits of their ORCA card number. This policy aims to make users aware that Kitsap Transit can hold them accountable for abuses of the reservation system.

In addition, Kitsap Transit has reinstituted a "CAPTCHA" to hinder "bots" or automated scripts from scooping up reservations; the agency's vendor has intercepted scripts attempting to book large numbers

of orders and has not observed any since switching to a faster processor in June. RocketRez will disable the accounts of any users using scripts to gain an advantage over other users.

Collectively these changes have resulted in improved outcomes for current users: On June 1, users were able to book an entire month's worth of trips 42 percent of the time. On August 1, users were successful 65 percent of the time, according to RocketRez.

Will the shortage of reservations ever get better?

Kitsap Transit has ordered two more Rich Passage-class vessels, which are slated for delivery in 2019. When the first one is delivered, Kitsap Transit will use it as a spare in case the Rich Passage 1 needs to be taken out of service. When the other one is delivered, Kitsap Transit will have a fleet of three Rich Passage-class vessels and will be able to add a second vessel to the schedule, doubling the supply of seats available. This increased supply could potentially alleviate the current imbalance between supply and demand of reservable seats.

Why not get rid of the reservation system and fill each sailing with walk-up customers?

When Washington State Ferries ran its fast-ferry service in the eighties, customers would queue at the dock more than 30 minutes early for a seat. This offset any time savings from the fast ferry and negatively impacted bus service. A majority of Kitsap Transit's fast-ferry customers have said in a survey last summer that they want a reservation system. Very few, if any, commuter ferry systems in the world have a reservation system, much less one that does not collect any fee or payment; Kitsap Transit is unique in that regard. The agency has hired Four Nines Technologies to evaluate whether Kitsap Transit should have a reservation system.

The system does not show me the sailing times I need. What's going on?

SELECT RESERVATION WEEK AND SAILING TIMES

👤 My Account

Times For: August 27th - August 31st : One Way Trip: Bremerton to Seattle

‹ Previous Week | Aug 27, 2018 ⌄ | Next Week ›

🕐 5:25 am
Bremerton-Seattle

🕐 3:15 pm
Bremerton-Seattle

🕐 4:30 pm
Bremerton-Seattle

🕐 5:45 pm
Bremerton-Seattle

The system lists only those sailing times for which there are available spots. If all reservations are taken for the sailing time you selected, it will not appear in the list on your screen.

08.29.2018

I cannot proceed because the "NEXT" button is grayed out. What's going on?

If sailings are available on at least one day of the week but are not available on the other days for that week, you need to indicate to the system what your preference is for the days on which all reservations are taken. The Next button will be available only after the user has completed this process.

In the example above, the user has selected 6:45 AM sailings and only Friday is available for that week. The system does not assume that because the sailing you selected is unavailable for a day that you do not want a reservation that day. The user must click on each day that is unavailable and either select a different sailing time or "Not Required" (see image below).

When a selection has been made for every day of the week the "Next" button will become active and you can continue processing your reservation (see image below).

08.29.2018

CONFIRM RESERVATION SCHEDULE

My Account

TO CHANGE SAILING TIME OR DELETE RESERVATION ON A SPECIFIC DATE CLICK ON THE DATE BELOW
June 11th - June 15th : One Way Trip: Bremerton to Seattle

⊘	**Monday - June 11th**	Not Required
⊘	**Tuesday - June 12th** 6:45 am - null	Not Required
⊘	**Wednesday - June 13th** 6:45 am - null	Not Required
⊘	**Thursday - June 14th** 6:45 am - null	Not Required
✔	**Friday - June 15th** 6:45 am - Individual 1 Way-Brem	Available

<   Next >

How do I cancel a reservation if I booked a week's worth of them?

Click on My Account and then the Order History tab. The system will display the active orders and the first date and sailing time in that set of reservations.

MY ACCOUNT

Back   Sign Out

Profile   **Order History**

Active	**Order #:144647** Departs: Wednesday, August 29th 2018, 4:30:00 pm
Voided	**Order #:137428** Departs: Monday, July 2nd 2018, 3:15:00 pm

Click on the Active button of the order containing the reservation you wish to cancel.

08.29.2018

Order #:144647 $6.00
Wednesday, August 29th 2018, 9:27:03 am

Amount Owing

Individual 1 Way-Brem 1 Adult	2018-08-29 - 04:30 PM	✖ Cancel Tickets
Individual 1 Way-Brem 1 Adult	2018-08-30 - 04:30 PM	✖ Cancel Tickets
Individual 1 Way-Brem 1 Adult	2018-08-31 - 04:30 PM	✖ Cancel Tickets

John Smith

August 29th 2018
🛫 Bremerton-Seattle
Bremerton
4:30 pm

〈   ✖ **Cancel Order**

To cancel a reservation, click "Cancel Tickets" next to the specific sailing date and time. To cancel the entire order, click "Cancel Order." Cancel buttons will not appear if the date of the trip is in the past.